THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) and (b) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) have formed a Joint Venture Company (JVC) namely *viz.*, Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL), Mumbai with M/s. British Gas Plc., U.K., an international company.

(c) Yes, Sir. The technology made available by M/s. British Gas has helped MGL to effectively execute the city gas distribution project in Mumbai and also to acquire rich experience to design, fabricate, operate and maintain the natural gas pipeline network in the densely populated areas.

LPG pipeline between Chennai and Pondicherry

2386. SHRI C.P.THIRUNAVUKKARASU : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the proposed LPG pipelines connecting Visakapatnam with Secunderabad and Mangalore and Coimbatore;

(b) whether there is any proposal to lay LPG pipeline between Chennai and Pondicherry; and

(c) if so, by when it will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) has achieved an overall progress of 6.1% against the schedule of 6% in respect of its Vizag-Secunderabad Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) pipeline. Supply of bare line pipes has been awarded and the tender for construction of pipeline has been floated. GAIL is in the process of carrying out the pre-project activities for the proposed Mangalore-Coimbatore LPG pipeline.

(b) and (c) The proposal for connecting Chennai only with LPG pipeline is at concept stage and no feasibility study has been carried out.

Supply of kerosene through Public Distribution System

2387. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to limit the supply of kerosene through public distribution system to persons below the poverty line;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor? and

(c) the savings in subsidy likely to be made on this account?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Kerosene oil allocated to the States/Union Territories by the Central Government for distribution under the Public Distribution System (PDS) is meant for cooking and illumination. It is the responsibility of the State Government/Union Territory Administration concerned to distribute it among needy people in a judicious manner.

Hike in Prices of Petroleum Products

2388. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHAA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of petroleum products were hiked recently;

(b) if so, the reasons for such a decision; and

(c) the details of amount oil pool will get to reduce its deficit due to this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) and (b) The Government have not hiked the basic ex-storage point prices of petroleum products recently. However, the retail selling prices of petrol, diesel and domestic LPG have gone up *with effect from* the midnight of 9th/10th November, 2001 due to the increase in dealers'/distributors' commission. The dealers' commission on petrol and diesel was increased by Rs.135/KL and Rs. 88/KL respectively. The distributors' commission on LPG (domestic) was increased by Rs. 1.02/cylinder.

(c) Since the increase in dealers'/distributors' commission has been passed on in consumer prices, it will not impact the oil pool account.

Wastage of Natural Gas

2389. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the quantum of natural gas being flared up every day at different locations of the country;

(b) the reasons for flaring up the gas which can be used for development purposes; and